

12 June 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

At this morning's hearings before the House Committee on Executive Expenditures, the witness was John P. Bracken, President of the Reserve Officers of the Naval Services. He was asked by Rep. Clarence J. Brown, (R., O.), if RONS had given any thought to the CIG provisions of the bill. Bracken replied that it had not, but that it approved the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency; that it felt that in setting up the CIA, the Munitions Boards, etc., Congress would really be providing for unification.

Brown then asked whether he did not think that there was danger of military control under the bill as written. Bracken pointed out that the bill provided that either a civilian or a military man could be appointed as Director of Central Intelligence. He added, "The Central Intelligence Agency could very well be headed by a civilian."

Brown then asked whether he thought it was wise to refer in the bill to the Executive Order establishing the CIG, or whether it was not up to Congress to say what the jurisdiction and functions of the CIA should be. Bracken replied that the matter of jurisdiction and functions of an agency was, of course, up to Congress. Brown repeated the point he has made before that an Executive Order may be changed at any time by the President, and that he could alter the functions of the Central Intelligence Agency at will.

Returning to the question of the military, Brown brought up the question of the National Security Council, under which CIA is to operate. Bracken pointed out that the Council would be composed of civilians, and that the President himself would preside at its meetings. He repeated that the Director of Central Intelligence need not be a military man, but might be a civilian.

Representative Forest A. Harness, (R., Ind.), inquired that, if Representative Brown entertained fears of a Gestapo, what difference it made whether the Director of Central Intelligence was a military man or a civilian, if they both had the same authority. Brown replied that he thought a uniform sometimes gives a man a little more feeling of power and authority. He added that he wanted "to write a lot of safeguards into this section that deals with the Central Intelligence Agency. I want to make certain that the activities and functions of the Central Intelligence Agency are carefully confined to international matters and to military matters and national security. We have enough people now running around the country looking into other people's business." At this point Rep. Dorn, (D., S.C.) interjected that the ones for Brown to look into were "the F.B.I. and Tom Clark!" Brown persisted, saying that he thought that Congress should decide whether the Director of Central Intelligence should be a military man or a civilian, and that he wanted CIA limited to authority necessary to protect the country, without additional extraordinary powers.